

ANNUAL REPORT

Upon the Health and Sanitary Conditions
of the

BELFORD RURAL DISTRICT

for the year ending 31st December 1939

In accordance with the Ministry of Health Circular 2067 of 19th July, 1940, this report is considerably curtailed owing to war conditions.

STATISTICS

1. Area 39,619. Acres
2. Registrar-General's estimate of the Resident Population 1939 (mid-year) 5,025.
3. Number of inhabited houses (end of 1939) according to Rate Books. 1124
4. Rateable Value £24,014
5. Sum represented by a penny rate, £97

Vital Statistics

	Total	M.	F.	
Live Birth				
Legitimate	53	20.	33	} Birth Rate 11.3 per 1,000 of estimated resident population.
Illegitimate	3	~~38~~ 2	~~29~~ 1	
Still Births		Nil		
Deaths	67	38	29	} Death Rate 13 per 1,000 of estimated resident population.
Death from Puerperal Causes		Nil.		

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age (total 4)

All infants per 1,000 live births 71.4
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births 75.5
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births, Nil.

Deaths from Cancer (All Ages)	10
Deaths from Measles (All ages)	Nil
Deaths from Whooping Cough (All ages)	1
Deaths from Diarrhoea (Under 2 years)	Nil

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE AUTHORITY

(a) MEDICAL

D.T. McDonald, M.D. Ch.B (Edin), South Bank, Belford - Medical Officer of Health (part-time). District Medical Officer for Belford West District, and Medical Officer for the Public Assistance Institution, Belford (appointed September, 1939) (part-time).

Jas McDonald, M.D.C.M. (Edin) Belford Villa, Belford - Public Vaccinator for Belford West District.

F.B. Macaskie, L.R.C.P & S (Edin) L.R.F.P.S. (Glas), Malabar, Seahouses. - District Medical Officer for Belford East District. Public Vaccinator for Belford East District (Part-time).

(b) OTHERS

Thos. W. Dodd, A.R. San.I., Twizell North Lodge, Belford - The District suffered a very severe loss when Mr. Dodd died suddenly



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on 15th February, 1939. He had been Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor for the District for 28 years, and consequently he had a most intimate knowledge of the whole sanitary circumstances of the area.

Following Mr. Dodd's death, the Sanitary Inspector's work was carried on by Mr. Casebourne until August when Mr. Kirk was appointed to the post. He, however, was a Territorial Army Officer, and was called up on the out-break of war, having done duty for a few weeks only. Thereafter the Council were without a Sanitary Inspector until January, 1940, when Mr. H. Mordue was appointed on a temporary basis for six months.

C.F.V.Cooke, The Sheiling, Seahouses - Vaccination Officer, Relieving Officer and Registrar of Births, Marriages and Deaths.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

- (1) Water.- In Belford there was some shortage of water during the last three months of the year due chiefly to the additional consumption of water by Troops stationed in the village. It is quite evident that in Belford extra storage of water is required so that everyone may have an adequate supply. This will become much more apparent when the new sewerage scheme is in full operation. No new water schemes were carried out in the area during the year.
- (2) Drainage & Sewerage.- The new Sewerage Scheme in Belford was commenced in April. It was anticipated that the Scheme would be completed in eight months, and should have been finished by the end of the year. The Council's Engineers stopped the work for some weeks in the summer on account of trouble with the Council's Clerk of Works. Following the outbreak of Hostilities the Contractors had difficulty in finding workmen. Principally on account of these two factors, the work was greatly delayed, and at the end of the year was not nearly complete.

HOUSING.

The six Council Houses at Red Barns Crescent, Bamburgh, were completed and occupied by tenants in January, 1939.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Meat-After the outbreak of war, no slaughtering was carried out in any of the five private slaughter houses in the district. All meat for the district was then supplied from the Government Controlled Slaughterhouse at Berwick on Tweed.

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

During the year thirty-two (32) cases of notifiable infectious diseases occurred in the district.

Chickenpox	15	Tuberculosis	3
Scarlet Fever	6	Diphtheria	2
Pneumonia	6		

Whooping Cough occurred in the Seahouses area in January and February.

Influenza was mildly prevalent throughout the district in February and March.

In September unaccompanied evacuee children, as well as a few adults with accompanied children, were sent to the district under the Government Evacuation Scheme. The health and cleanliness of the evacuee children was, on the whole, good. There was some cases of impetigo, and only two cases of scabies were reported.

The number of severely verminous children was small, and these were dealt with satisfactorily by those with whom the children were billeted. One evacuee boy contracted diphtheria, one chickenpox, and several measles, ~~some~~ ^{soon} after their arrival in the district.

AIR RAID PRECAUTIONS.

Ambulance Classes were held in Belford, Bamburgh and Seahouses for the purpose of providing First Aid personnel in the district. These classes were fairly well attended especially by the women of the district. A large number of trained first-aid men in the area are liable to be called up under the National Service Act. It cannot be stressed too strongly that more men of 45 years of age and over, should offer themselves for training, so that the district may be well supplied with trained first-aiders, whose services may be required at any time during the war.

D. T. McDONALD M.D. Ch.B.,

Medical Officer of Health.